

THE

MAN ◆ U N I V E R S E

DEAD BOY Detectives



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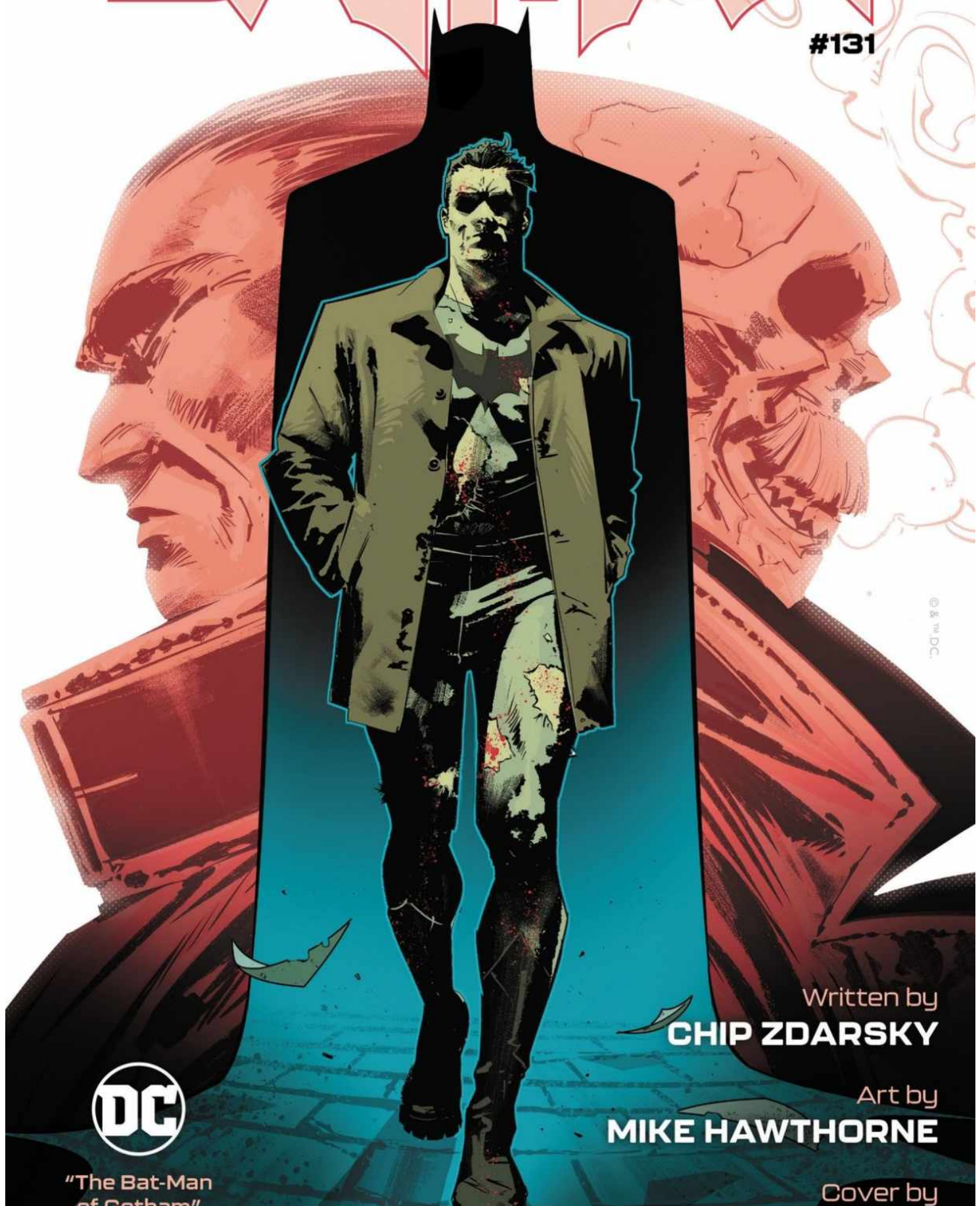
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Pornsak Pichetshote
Jeff Stokely

WHO IS BRUCE WAYNE?

BATMAN

#131



© & TM DC

Written by

CHIP ZDARSKY

Art by

MIKE HAWTHORNE



"The Bat-Man
of Gotham"

Cover by

When do things change?

Because when Ryan finally asked his beautiful ninth-grade classmate on a date, he **immediately** thought-- "Don't freak her out."

Why did he instantly think she'd be scared of him?

When she doubled over in pain, why did he assume it was his fault?

It'd take **time** to realize that was his father's influence. His **father**, who routinely hit both his mother and Ryan.

It'd take time to discern how the two differed. How Ryan **wasn't** his father. He wasn't a man who punched down.

Because, of course, things can change.

It just takes time...



What--

--the--
the--

Sadly, Ryan's time
had run out.

--no--

Of course, the three-thousand-year-old **witch** in captivity knew none of this.



No, she had answered that **knock** on her door, expecting a threat--



--only to discover something... **odder**. Since, she had been **here--** chained.

Trapped.

Although her manacles weren't the true obstacle.

No, what hindered her were the golden **Things That Weren't Stones** around her.



She--the last surviving witch of **Thessaly**. Who had once won the hearts of gods and beings more **powerful** than gods.



She--who had pulled the moon to Earth merely to exact revenge upon her foes.



But for now, **Thessaly** bided her time.

Because her plan was already in motion.

THE

SANDMAN ♦ U N I V E R S E

DEAD BOY Detectives

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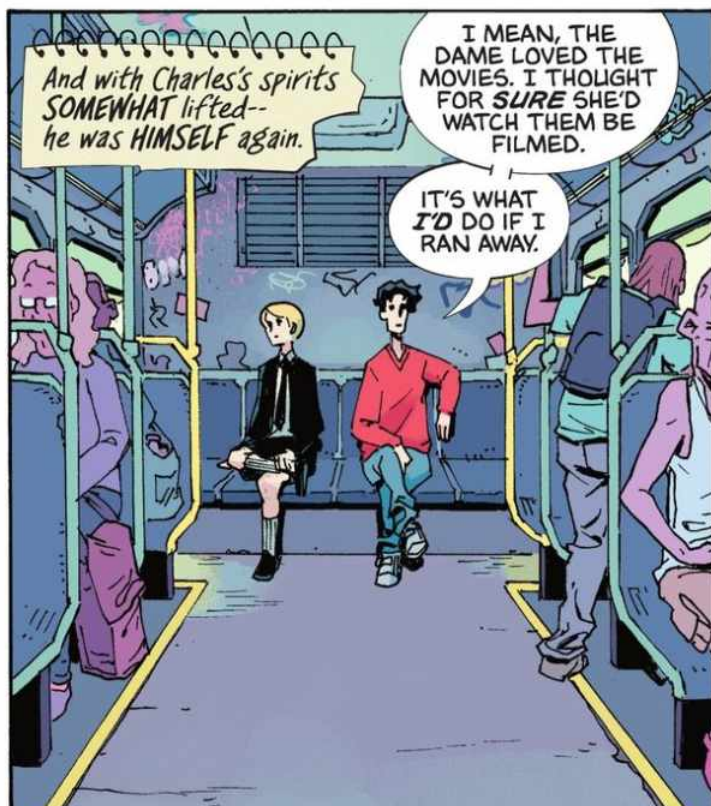
1:25 cover FILIPE ANDRADE

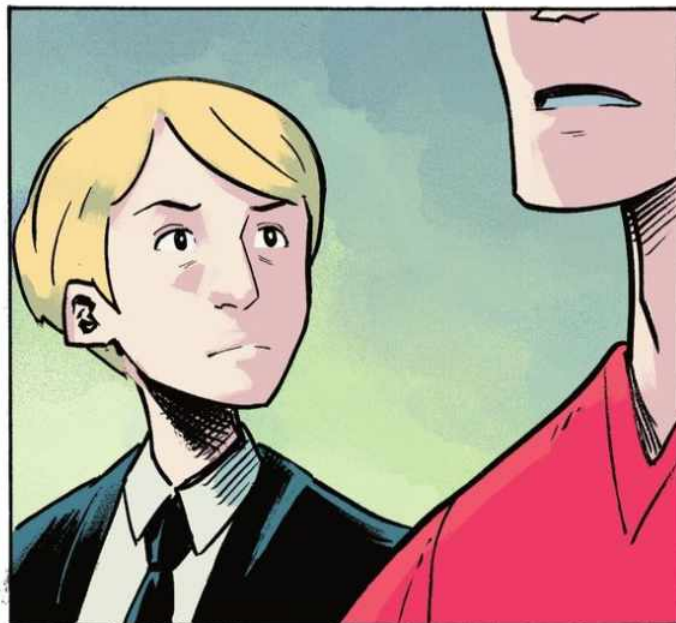
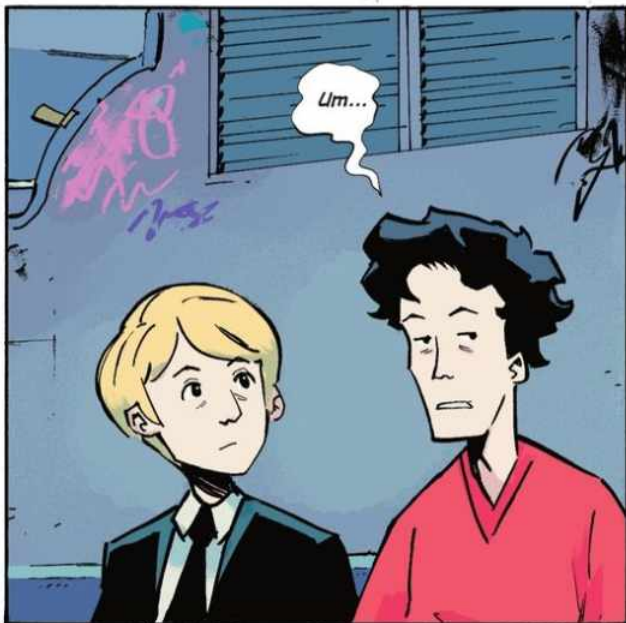
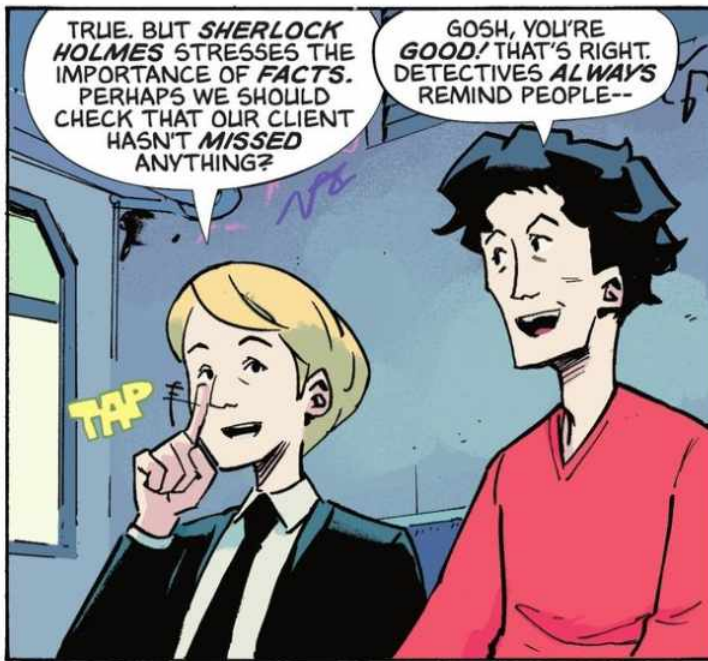
1:50 cover YOSHITAKA AMANO

DEAD BOY DETECTIVES created by NEIL GAIMAN
THE SANDMAN UNIVERSE curated by NEIL GAIMAN

CHAPTER ONE: SWORDS OF ARKHANE









Many, many, MANY years ago, some bullies spent their nights at boarding school trying to raise DEVILS that never came. They killed all SORTS attempting to call them.

Frogs, rabbits, cats...

...and me, EDWIN PAINE.

Then, many years later, I RETURNED.

But sadly, so had the boys. I watched them torture poor CHARLES ROWLAND to death.

But being ghosts isn't THAT bad. No one EVER bothers you at the library. And if you read the right things, becoming a detective's EASY.

Easy enough to start your own AGENCY.

ROWLAND + PAINE
DETECTIVES
"NO CASE TO SMALL"

No case too small.

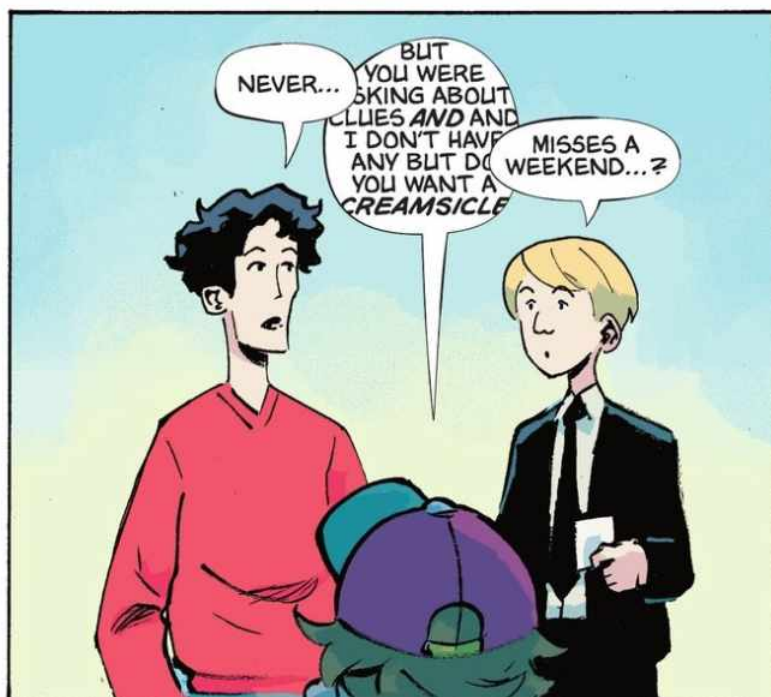




CHAPTER TWO: THE CLIENT



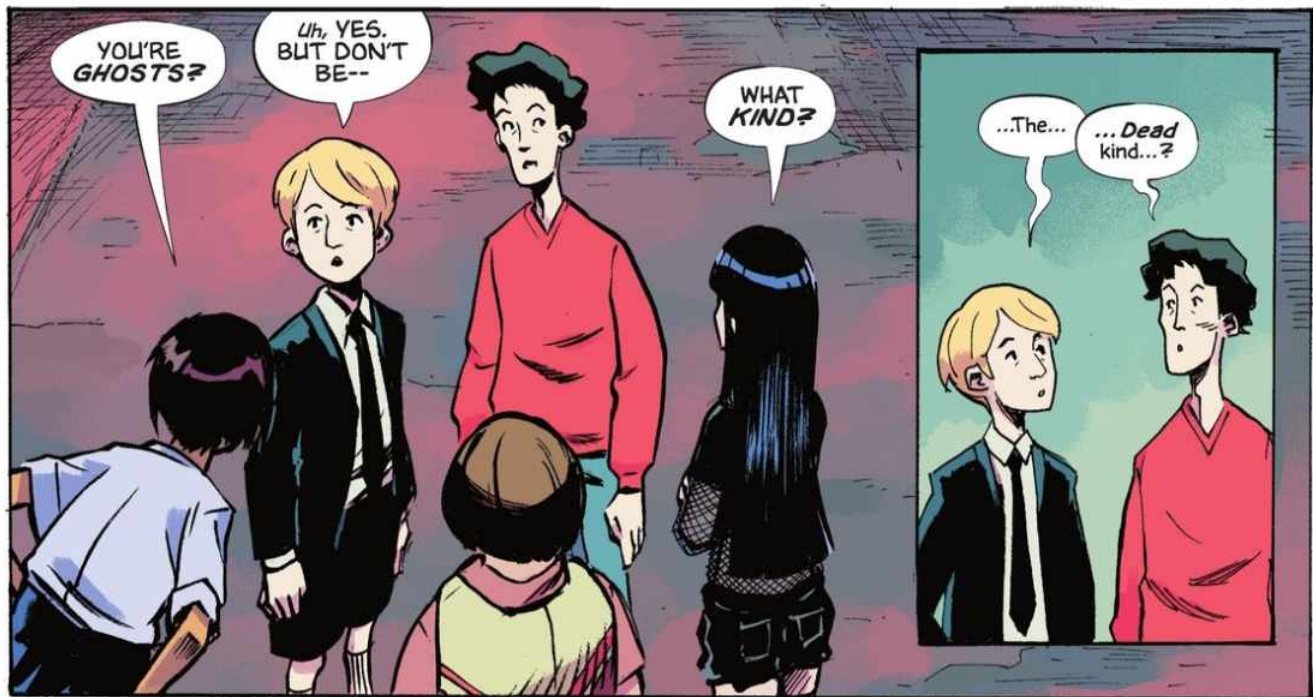
AND NO ONE LIKES CREAMSICLES EXCEPT FOR JAI SHE ALWAYS GETS THEM AT THE THAI TEMPLE CUZ SHE'S A THAI AND SHE NEVER MISSES A WEEKEND THERE AND SHE'S ALWAYS INVITING ME BUT I CAN'T GO







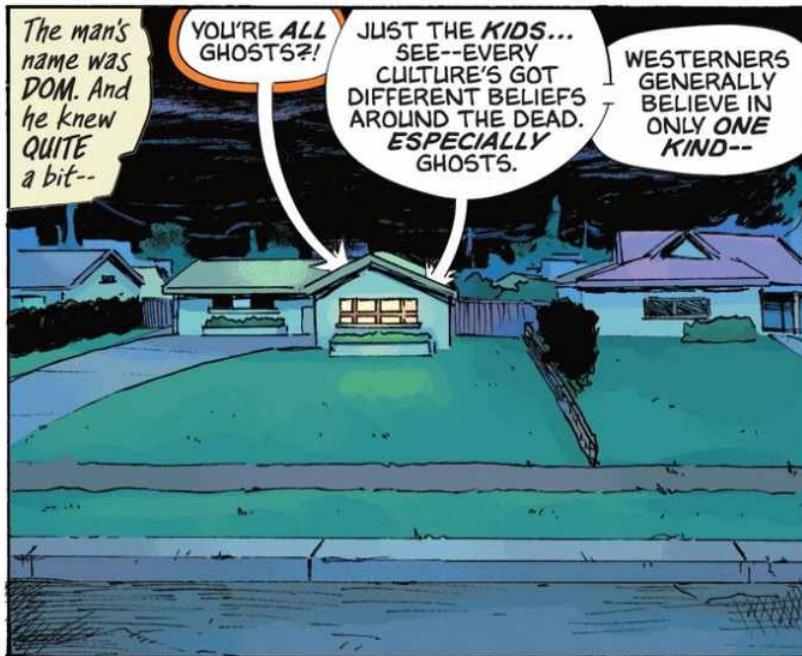




CHAPTER THREE:

เรือที่ใหญ่กว่า*

*(THE BIGGER BOAT)







CHAPTER FOUR: "OH."

CHARLES...
NOW THAT
WE'VE FOUND JAI,
SHOULDN'T WE BE
GOING? ALL THIS,
SNAKE GHOSTS
AND MAGGOT-
BACKS...

...IT'S
MUCH MORE
THAN WE'RE
USED TO.

I KNOW!
ISN'T IT
EXCITING?!

IT MIGHT BE THE
MOST EXCITING
MYSTERY WE'VE
SEEN IN **AGES**,
DON'T YOU
THINK?



I--I
mean...

Charles finally
sounded like
himself again...

I
suppose.



...
EDWIN?

THANK
YOU.

THIS
WHOLE TIME,
YOU KNEW THE
REAL REASON
I WANTED TO
COME HERE,
AND--



I
MISS HER
TOO, OLD
MAN.

And I **DID**. Those
days when there
were **THREE** of us.

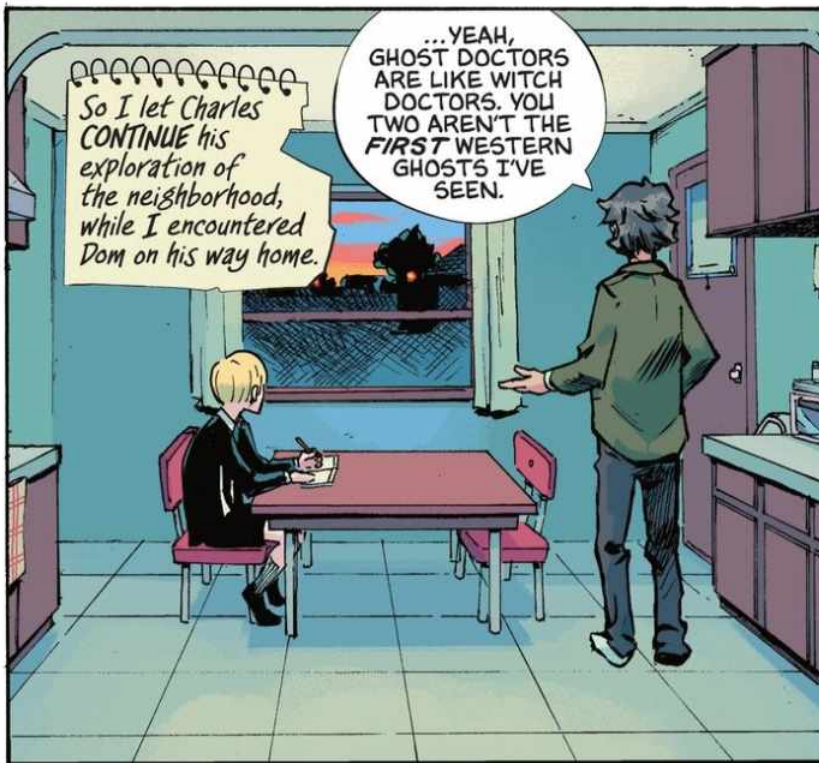
But that was the
problem with being
ghost detectives...



...when only
TWO of you
were ghosts.

And my stomach
tied itself
AGAIN in **KNOTS**,
knowing the
secret Charles
had no idea I
was keeping
from **HIM**.







Edwin was surprised by how relieved those three words made him. "I got you."



After worrying about Charles their entire trip, it felt nice believing someone else would take that mantle.

That the two could return to their cases and adventures.



All his life, Dom had been good with kids.

So he had to remind himself--



--these were dead kids. Children whose innocence had been cut short.

That's why he lied. Because whatever was happening was more dangerous than he dared let on.



And these children deserved to be clear of that danger.

They deserved the chance to stay innocent and earnest and sincere--even in death.

Didn't they?



Oh.



The Thai call it a krasue--
yet one more ghost that
shouldn't exist here in
the West.



A female
spirit that
by day lives
as normal.

Only for its head
to tear away by
night, its internal
organs trailing
beneath it as it
floats, hunting
for victims.

It is the most
savage, terrifying,
and vengeful
ghost of all.



SORRY, I
FORGOT--

DOM!



But even it...

No...

Even it paled in comparison to the events that would soon occur.

A ritual the three-thousand-year-old witch in captivity continued to cooperate with--

--to the satisfaction of her captor.

But Thessaly was also satisfied.

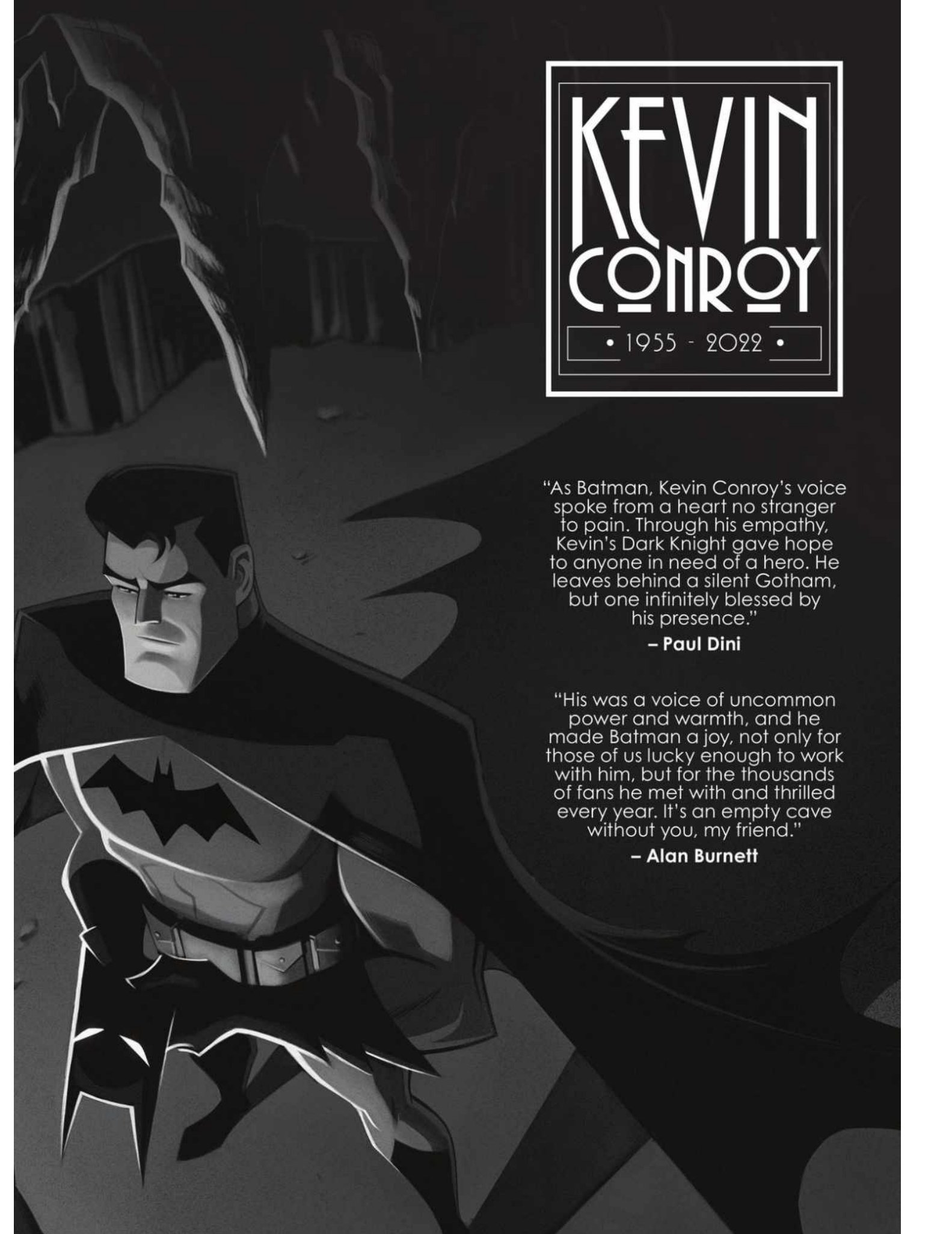
For she had once won the hearts of gods and beings more powerful than gods.

She had pulled the moon down to Earth merely to exact revenge.

But those feats would be **nothing** compared to the events soon to come.

When Thessaly would have her vengeance and be free...

...and no soul caught in the middle would ever be the same



KEVIN CONROY

• 1955 - 2022 •

"As Batman, Kevin Conroy's voice spoke from a heart no stranger to pain. Through his empathy, Kevin's Dark Knight gave hope to anyone in need of a hero. He leaves behind a silent Gotham, but one infinitely blessed by his presence."

– Paul Dini

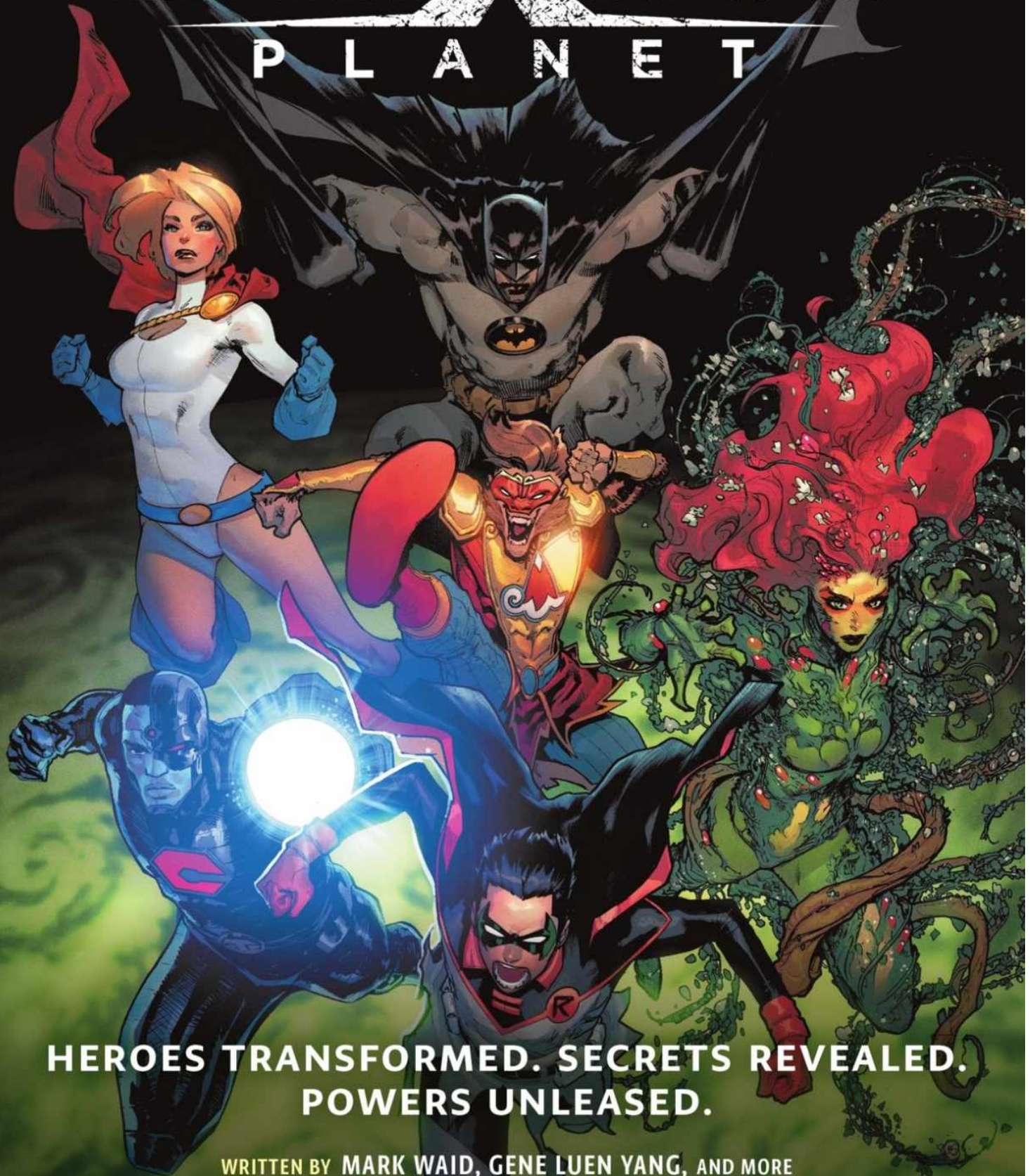
"His was a voice of uncommon power and warmth, and he made Batman a joy, not only for those of us lucky enough to work with him, but for the thousands of fans he met with and thrilled every year. It's an empty cave without you, my friend."

– Alan Burnett



DC NATION SPECIAL EDITION

DC UNIVERSE
LAZARUS
PLANET



**HEROES TRANSFORMED. SECRETS REVEALED.
POWERS UNLEASHED.**

WRITTEN BY MARK WAID, GENE LUEN YANG, AND MORE
ART BY RICCARDO FEDERICI, BILLY TAN, AND MORE



**"NEW HEROES WILL BE BORN
AND EXISTING HEROES' POWERS
WILL BE CHANGED FOREVER."**

In the climax of December's *Batman vs. Robin* #4, a Lazarus Volcano erupts, spewing dangerous and transformative chemicals into Earth's atmosphere.

"That much magic can't be contained—so when it erupts it spews out Lazarus Resin and creates a violent 'rainstorm' that covers the world," explains Mark Waid, the superstar writer and architect of the DC Universe: Lazarus Planet event.

Waid has been no stranger to the DC Universe this past year, penning the bestselling series *Batman/Superman: World's Finest* and *Batman vs. Robin*, which set the stage for this event, beginning in January's *Lazarus Planet: Alpha* #1.

"In *Batman/Superman: World's Finest*, we introduced the Devil Nezha, an ancient evil that could be contained only within the tomb on a remote island," Waid says. "Once our heroes sealed him inside, we sprung the surprise reveal—the tomb is on Lazarus Island. Then in *Batman vs. Robin*, we learn that Mother Soul, Damian's great-grandmother on his al Ghul side, has been searching for Nezha and used Damian to unleash him once more."



**"NEZHA IS A
TRICKSTER GOD WHO
OFTEN DANCES ON
THAT LINE BETWEEN
GOOD AND EVIL."**

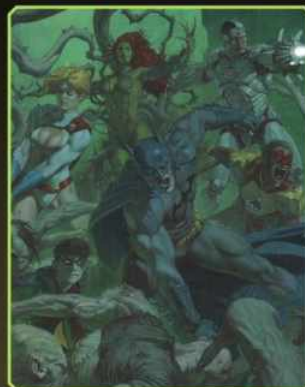
Helping craft the two-month Lazarus Planet event alongside Waid will be *Monkey Prince* writer Gene Luen Yang. "Traditionally, Nezha is a trickster god who often dances on that line between good and evil," Yang says. "In *Batman/Superman: World's Finest*, Mark brought him into the DC Universe and specifically tied him into elements of the Batman mythos."



The Lazarus Volcano will make its rumblings known throughout the DC Universe in a series of one-shots helmed by all-star talent, including Francis Manapul, Phillip Kennedy Johnson, Leah Williams, Max Dunbar, Clayton Henry, Tim Seeley, and Marguerite Sauvage. Fan-favorite heroes throughout the DC Universe will be heavily invested in uncovering the secrets behind the Lazarus Resin.

"Power Girl is part of the team that tries to free Earth's magical artifacts from the Tower of Fate, where Nezha has imprisoned them," Waid explains. "Poison Ivy, on the other hand, is part of the team exploring one of Ra's al Ghul's mountain headquarters looking for clues to counteract the resin. Ra's was aware of her background as a brilliant biochemist who, like him, is eager to reestablish a working ecosystem before our planet succumbs to global war."

**"THE WRITERS AND ARTISTS ARE
EMBRACING THAT FREEDOM TO
DO SOME OF THE BEST WORK..."**



"The writers and artists are embracing that freedom to do some of the best work I've seen in a long time," Waid continues. "Everyone's been incredibly cooperative and willing to toss ideas back and forth to make their own stories even better."

The full scope of the story starts out in *Lazarus Planet: Alpha* and continues in the one-shot tie-ins *Lazarus Planet: Assault on Krypton*, *Lazarus Planet: We Were Once Gods*, *Lazarus Planet: Dark Fate*, *Lazarus Planet: Next Evolution*, and *Lazarus Planet: Legends Reborn*—all leading to the fateful finale in *Lazarus Planet: Omega* and the aftermath in *Lazarus Planet: Revenge of the Gods*.



After the events of Lazarus Planet, the gods of the Multiverse decide to take down the heroes they once called champions and the world they've sworn to protect.

The team of gods is led by Earth-0's wizard Shazam, who has been granted a vision from the Lazarus Resin the likes of which he has never seen before.

As if major changes to existing heroes and the introduction of all-new ones weren't enough, Lazarus Planet has a ton of surprises in store for even the most hardcore DC fan. "There's a fusion of Cyborg and Blue Beetle, a key role for Blue Devil, the mightiest bolt of Shazam lightning in history, Swamp Thing vs. Nezha, and a really, really, really ugly turn for Batman," Waid teases.

"Mark's premise for Lazarus Planet is so fun, the rest of us can't help but respond with all the creativity we can muster," Yang says. "Even as a fan, I can't wait to read what everyone's come up with."





LAZARUS RAINS DOWN!



LAZARUS PLANET: ASSAULT ON KRYPTON

Written by: Nicole Maines, C.S. Pacat, Frank Barbiere, and Leah Williams

Art by: Skylar Patridge, Scott Godlewski, Sami Basri, and Marguerite Sauvage

With the world in chaos and Lazarus raining from the skies, the Earth's protectors from Krypton are hit hard, and the heroes will never be the same again.



LAZARUS PLANET: NEXT EVOLUTION

Written by: Ram V, Brandon T. Snider, Chuck Brown, and Delilah S. Dawson

Art by: Lalit Kumar Sharma, Laura Braga, Alitha Martinez and Mark Morales, and Ro Stein and Ted Brandt

Amazing new powers have been gifted to the freedom fighters of the future. What perils will these villain-vanquishing virtuosos face alongside a brand-new legend, The Vigil?



LAZARUS PLANET: WE WERE ONCE GODS

Written by: Francis Manapul, Dan Watters, Phillip Kennedy Johnson, and Josie Campbell

Art by: Francis Manapul, Max Dunbar, Jack Herbert, and Caitlin Yarsky

The gods are in for some big changes as Lazarus rain beats down upon the Earth. Explore the Lazarus Planet's effect on DC Universe's extraordinary creatures and locations involving the Shazam Family and the Rock of Eternity.



LAZARUS PLANET: DARK FATE

Written by: Tim Seeley, Dennis Culver, A.L. Kaplan, and Alyssa Wong

Art by: Baldemar Rivas, Chris Burnham, A.L. Kaplan, and Haining

Who are the new villains created by the Lazarus rain and what heroes can stop them? A sinister threat will bring a new chapter to the Doom Patrol while a new danger lurks in the dark corners of the Spirit World for new character Xanthe?



LAZARUS PLANET: LEGENDS REBORN

Written by: Alex Segura, Greg Pak, Alex Paknadel, and Dennis Culver

Art by: Clayton Henry, Minkyu Jung, Christopher Mitten, and Jesús Merino

Heroes and villains long forgotten return! Nightwing and the new hero City Boy go on a quest to save Gotham from a surge of fantastical power that will affect the DC Universe forevermore!

LAZARUS PLANET: REVENGE OF THE GODS (COVER COMING SOON)

Written by: G. Willow Wilson

Art by: Cian Tormey & Caitlin Yarsky

The wizard Shazam has teamed up with the Quintessence to regain control of their champions. Shazam and Wonder Woman must work together and defeat the gods as they risk losing their powers for good.

DC NATION SPOTLIGHT ON

DC UNIVERSE LAZARUS PLANET CHECKLIST

JANUARY

- ☐ *Lazarus Planet: Alpha #1*
- ☐ *Lazarus Planet: Assault on Krypton #1*
- ☐ *Lazarus Planet: We Were Once Gods #1*
- ☐ *Lazarus Planet: Legends Reborn #1*
- ☐ *Monkey Prince #10*

FEBRUARY

- ☐ *Lazarus Planet: Next Evolution #1*
- ☐ *Monkey Prince #11*
- ☐ *Lazarus Planet: Dark Fate #1*
- ☐ *Lazarus Planet: Omega #1*
- ☐ *Batman vs. Robin #5*

MARCH

- ☐ *Lazarus Planet: Revenge of the Gods #1*
- ☐ *Wonder Woman #797*
- ☐ *Lazarus Planet: Revenge of the Gods #2*

APRIL

- ☐ *Lazarus Planet: Revenge of the Gods #3*
- ☐ *Wonder Woman #798*
- ☐ *Lazarus Planet: Revenge of the Gods #4*



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